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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Intelligence School

DATE: 16 October 1958

FROM : Chief, Assessment and Evaluation Staff

SUBJECT: Screening for Clerical Refresher Training Courses

1. There are many things to consider from a policy point of view in setting up minimum screening standards for refresher courses. Unless one is pretty sure that it would cost too much to teach an individual sufficiently more skill so she would be useful on her particular job, it is doubtful whether screening scores are appropriate. Another condition that occurs to me that might justify screening scores is the detrimental effect on the learning of the other students by the presence of one or more students of very low ability. Because of the many policy questions, I am not making any recommendations, but simply reporting some of the findings of a project we have conducted at your request. I would suggest we arrange a conference at a later date to determine the use that should be made of these findings.

2. The findings concerning the Typing Techniques Review Course:

a. All female students enrolled in the Typing Techniques Review Course from 9 September 1957 through 16 May 1958, who were taking the course for the first time, were studied. The total number is 93.

b. The students were divided into a pass and fail group. Pass was defined as meeting the 40 words per minute, seven or fewer errors requirement. There were 44 in the pass group and 49 in the fail group.

c. Fewer people with the title of typist than with the title of clerk failed to meet this requirement.

d. The pass group was superior on the pretest in typing.

e. Both groups made just about as much improvement over their initial score, but with a considerable number of them still not meeting the passing standards.

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3. Findings concerning the Shorthand Theory Review Course:

- a. Those sent for refresher training do less well on the EOD aptitude tests, e.g., have less aptitude and less general intellectual ability.
- b. The 67 girls who took the Shorthand Theory Review Course for the first time, from 27 May 1957 through 16 May 1958, were divided into a pass group of 50 and a fail group of 17 (pass meaning transcription of at least one 50 word per minute test, with no more than three errors).
- c. The pass group exceeded the fail group in general aptitude and intellectual level. The level of speed of pretest dictation chosen by the student is a pretty good predictor of what she will do in the course. Whereas 50% of those who chose the 40 word per minute pretest failed, only one person who chose the 50 word per minute pretest failed, and no person who chose the 60 word per minute pretest failed.

4. The above findings have implications for the standards to be employed in initial employment as much as they do for standards of admission to clerical refresher courses. At your convenience these matters can be discussed.



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